

Freedom of expression essay sample

[Philosophy](#), [Freedom](#)



Introduction

The traditional values of societies are changing and every society in the current era is experiencing a transformational change. The conventional trends of the society are changed and new and modernized approach is implemented by the members of the society. The element of information that is discharged through different mediums is wide and varied and it varied from culture to culture. In this paper we will discuss the phenomenon of freedom of expression and why information that is emitted by different mediums should be checked and censored. Emphasis is laid on the phenomenon of media freedom, the use of celebrity images, plagiarism, censorship of sex and violence and etc.

Freedom of expression

The phenomenon of freedom of speech is considered as an important phenomenon of communication and it is the freedom to speak freely which is without censorship or limitation. The element of freedom of speech is usually related with the phenomenon of verbal speech but in certain cases it is also linked with the element of seeking, imparting and receiving different ideas or information which are not linked with the medium that is used (Clayton & Tomilson, 2001). The freedom to express feelings and the freedom of speech are closely related to each other. Practically the rights of freedom of speech are not absolute in any country of the world and this right is varied with certain limitations.

Limitations of freedom of expression

The freedom of expression and the freedom of speech although is important for the society and individuals and countries stress on it a lot. But the freedom has certain limitations and people can use media, internet and other related sources but with certain limitations. The freedom of expression and speech is questioned when the legal systems, societal values conflicts with the values and rights of others (Lessing & McLeod, 2007). Elements like pornography, hurting the religious or racial sentiments of others, going against the norms of a certain country and etc are considered to be the major violation of laws that are related to the freedom of expression. If these elements occur in a society then they suffer legal sanctions and social disapprobation.

However, certain philosophers believe that our society should be free from all the restrictions and liberty should prevail in the society. The degrees to which people take offenses vary with person to person and in certain cases it may also result to unjustified prejudice. Certain individuals are trying to infringe the rights of others through different techniques like plagiarism and intellectual property violation. That is the reason why there are certain laws and acts that are used to restrict this practice (Kamali, 1997). Criticisms are laid on different group of individuals and societies when they affect the religious, social, moral identities of certain other groups. This criticism posses negative affects in both the short and the long run.

Freedom of expression may seem to be a viable approach in the eyes of many individuals and philosophers and in democratic and civilized society the freedom must prevail. But hurting other for the sake of prejudice and

hatred is not a good strategy for the society. There are numerous examples when the religious, moral, cultural and ethnic sentiments of individuals were tarnished by other group of people.

Different individuals have paid the price when they have not complied with the laws of the society and different offenses which are quite intense are registered against these individuals. David Irving is one of those individuals which were behind the bars when he hurt the religious sentiments of Christians. David actually denied the existence of the Holocaust 17 years ago. The issue of caricatures of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) was considered as a major issue in the freedom of expression. The cartoons were published by Danish news paper and the Muslims around the world depicted their hatred towards the west (Alexander, 2005). In the aspect of freedom of expression both the scenarios are not valid and it can be easily said that an individual that infringes the rights of others should be punished. However, certain group of individuals believes that freedom of expression is meaningless if it does not protect the unpopular speech. However, certain group of people also believes that these controversies rise because of the mediums and if proper medium stop these controversies then these issues might not affect the society. The common areas in the freedom of expression are equality and freedom of expression itself.

The tyranny of the situation is that in our societies the values and beliefs are confusing. In terms of equality the issue of pornography is usually raised. A conflicting debate is surrounding the issue of pornography. The debates revolves around different facts in which certain individuals thinks that

pornography is affecting the rights of women and an extended view of pornography depicts that it also results in violence, sexual harassment and certain other criminal activities. While, certain group of people believes that people should have easy access to pornography because it is their own will and desire to see and experience what they want (Elior, Nave, & Milman, 2007). This conflicting debate is closely linked with the phenomenon of freedom of expression and the laws that are relating to it. In a broader context this is also known as a hate speech. Therefore, in these circumstances the freedom of expression in terms of pornography is not justified and in some societies which are religiously more intense like South Asia, Middle East and etc offenses might be raised in restricting the freedom of expression. This might happen because of number of reasons like women are not treated in a proper manner and the religious scriptures of these individuals prohibits it (Lemire, 2009).

The freedom of expression has different forms and it has affected different walks of life. This element is also linked with the censorship in music and many individuals consider that any attempt towards censoring music or videos is a basic threat towards the tenets of freedom. These individuals believe that since an individual is an adult and therefore it's their own choice to select their own decisions and they totally deserve the ability to do so. However, in today's world certain checks in balances are necessary for our society. The music industry is quite free to express their feelings and musicians are also free to express their feelings through their songs.

The core idea of limiting and posing restrictions on certain aspects like pornography, sexual advertisement, religious and cultural injustice and etc drives from the phenomenon of prioritizing the rights of vulnerable members of the society. However, this vulnerable group can convert to large group of people and if the situation gets worsen then different nations might combine together to register their voice against the restricting the freedom of expression.

The political aspect of this concept depicts that it is quite an easy job to support the views that are already powerful and controversial opinions are silenced because they are held by the minority. In this scenario the situation gets worst when the powerful members of the society gain protection from ‘ hate speech’ and certain other phenomenon’s that are subject to restrictions. The most apt example of this scenario would be the fact that in the northern region the Jews are receiving very strong protection and through different approach Muslims are being silenced (Press, 2009).

Restriction on freedom of expressions does not means that the rights of an individual or a group of individuals are sabotaged but emphasis is laid on a point that it is not ethically, morally or legally valid to hurt the feelings of others and name this aspect as the freedom of expression. The minority groups usually register complains about restricting the freedom of expression because their religious and morally sentiments are tarnished by the majority through freedom of expression. The caricatures of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), denial of the Holocaust, saying abusive words against certain religious scriptures through a proper channel, insulting a country or a

society and etc are some of the examples in which the members of the society are affected by those who are registering their voice in favor of freedom of expression. That is the reason why the affected groups depict intensive behavior towards limiting the freedom of expression.

These affected groups register their through proper channels like the United Nations and etc. Furthermore, they also depict their anger by developing a negative mindset towards the entire nation and the intensity of this hatred goes to an extreme in which the people are ready to kill the individuals of another nation. The most apt example of this hatred was the cartoon incident of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) in which Muslims all over the world boycotted Danish products and all of them believe that this a direct attempt to make a mockery of their religion. The religious sentiments of Muslims were tarnished by this approach and in this scenario one can easily said that it was a clear cut example when restricting the freedom of expression was a viable technique. The issue of caricatures can be classified as a justifiable attempt in restricting the freedom of expression. The long term effects of such incidents are that a sense of rivalry is created between two groups that affect the solidarity of both the groups in both the short and the long run.

Therefore, it can be concluded that freedom of expression, freedom of speech, raising your voice against negative sentiments and etc are good for the society and it helps the society is maintaining a proper balance between individuals, groups and countries. However, this freedom must comply with the laws and they must not hurt the religious, ethnic, social and moral principles of others. The mediums of communication should also control this

and television, radio, internet and etc must convey such information that is approved by the legal authorities.

The current situation of the world towards freedom of expression is unjust and bias and wealthy groups are using different mediums and sources to sabotage the rights of minority groups. That is the reason why these minority groups are raising their voices against such groups. The society is injecting anger in the minds of these groups and that is why they are raising their voice to limit the freedom of expression. In a broader perspective the policies that are related to freedom of expression are hurting the minorities and they are increasing the differences between societies and cultures. That is why proper limitations must be laid on freedom of expression and freedom of speech and the above given incidents clearly depict and justify that if the religious, moral, ethnic and moral sentiments of a group of individuals are affected then limitations must be applied on the freedom of expression.

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